Review of the industrial policy, procedures and their implementation is an ongoing process. The focus of the review is always on development and promotion of industries rather than on regulations.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to establish new industries.

Decline in Export Growth Rate

1062. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export growth rate has slowed down sharply over the last three years and from a high of 18.4 per cent in 1995-96, it has shrunk to -5.1 per cent in the first half of 1998-99; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken to boost exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) As per the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics data the export growth in US $ terms in 1995-96 was registered at 20.8% over the same period last year. This growth is estimated at 3.7% in 1998-99 over the corresponding provisional estimates of the previous year. The exports have shown remarkable recovery and has been provisionally estimated at 11.32% in US $ terms during April-January, 2000 over the same period last year.

(b) A number of steps have been taken to further enhance the export growth which include reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation, simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives, identification of thrust sectors and focus regions.

Structural Reforms

1063. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the major policy decisions taken by Government since the inception of the structural reforms;

(b) what are the objectives of these policy decisions; and

(c) how these policies have so far benefited the industrial sector, especially medium and Small Scale Industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (c) The structural reforms in the industrial sector had been introduced in the year 1991 in the form of a New Industrial Policy (NIP). The major objectives of the New Industrial Policy are to build on the gains already made, correct the distortions or weaknesses that may have crept in, maintain a sustained growth in productivity and gainful employment and attain international competitiveness. All sectors of industry whether small, medium or large belonging to the public, private or cooperative sector would be encouraged to grow. In pursuit of these objectives, Government have taken a number of steps, which include, inter-alia the following:—

(i) The scope of de-licensing has been widened. Only six items are under compulsory licensing at present.

(ii) More thrust have been given to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to supplement domestic investment. For promoting FDI, Government have recently placed all items/ activities under the automatic route, with a few exceptions.

(iii) The investment limit on plant and machinery for SSI/ancillary industrial undertakings has been lowered from Rs. 3 crore to Rs. 1 crore. The limit for tiny industries has been fixed at Rs. 25 lakh.

These policy decisions have resulted in increase in the number of small scale units, increase in the generation of employment and enhancement in exports.

Identification of new items for Export

†1064. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether new market and new items have been identified for exports during the last few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the value of exports of these new items made to these markets during the last three years?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.